

Town of Arlington
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

Minutes of 4/18/2006, 7:15 PM, Town Hall Annex 2nd Floor Conference Room
Submitted by Scott Smith

Members present: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Jeff Maxtutis, Lt. Jim McHugh, Mike Rademacher, John Sanchez, Scott Smith, Ed Starr

Associates: Howard Muise, Erik Moore

1. Administration

The minutes of 3/21/06 were approved unanimously. Ed Starr reviewed the agenda packet.

2. Forest Street

John Sanchez presented the current plans for Forest Street. The lower part is to have sidewalk on both sides, but upper part will have a sidewalk on the east side only. He noted that it would be expensive to provide a sidewalk on both sides. The plan also included curb radius tightening in the area between the Heard Road and Park Avenue extension. He is planning a public meeting in June. Other issues that were raised include:

- Given the significant traffic and possibly significant pedestrian volumes, should there be a sidewalk on both sides? We will do the following to investigate:
 - ITE sidewalk guidelines and bus ridership (Scott Smith)
 - Pedestrian usage (Elisabeth Carr-Jones)
 - Cost of an asphalt sidewalk on the west side (John Sanchez)
- Some households may experience a significant drop in available parking, as they were (illegally) using the existing sidewalk for parking. We should survey driveway lengths to determine the parking impacts on households.
- The stop-ahead sign on Park Ave Extension southbound between Forest and Summer streets is incorrect; it should be a signal ahead sign.

3. Marathon and Waldo

Scott Smith presented traffic volumes, crash history, results of field observations, and possible actions. There was general agreement on the following actions:

- Paint stop line bars at the intersection
- Replace the graffiti-covered stop sign on Waldo westbound
- Add a stop-ahead sign on Waldo westbound (the stop sign itself is partially obstructed by a street tree, and there is no room to move the sign closer to the curb)

There was general agreement not to pursue the following:

- Three-way stop (traffic volumes do not meet the criteria)
- Reduced speed limit (given constraints imposed by the State, doing this legally would be difficult, if not impossible)
- W2-1 warning sign with advisory speed plaque on Marathon. Motorists may assume that the sign refers to the intersection with Broadway.
- Requiring the owner of #54 Marathon to trim their front hedge. Although this hedge appears to be in violation of the "visibility at corners" section of the bylaw, the existence

of a parking lane on Marathon Street means it is not creating a substantive safety problem.

4 Speeding on Crosby

Mike Rademacher reported that possible recommendations will include

- Marking the area near Bishop School as a school zone
- Added signage
- Coordination with any effort to improve travel to/from Bishop school

6. Lockeland / Mass update

Lt. McHugh reported that TriState will be working on the loop detectors this week.

7. Crosswalks

Howard Muise presented the list. After some discussion, we decided that the list (in order) would be as follows:

1-7: Remark seven crosswalks on Massachusetts Avenue to current width standard:

- Marathon Street
- Orvis Road/Grafton Street
- Wyman Street
- Library Way/Water Street
- Academy Street
- Bartlett Avenue
- Coleman Road

Install new thermoplastic markings on the following locations:

- 8. Water Street at Minuteman Bikeway crossing
- 9. Park Avenue at Oakland Avenue
- 10. Massachusetts Avenue at Sunrise Assisted Living Facility
- 11. Summer Street at Oak Hill Drive
- 12. River Street at Cornell Street

Signalized intersections along Massachusetts Avenue:

- 13. Mill Street
- 14. Lake Street
- 15. Route 60

Scott Smith and Lt. McHugh both expressed the opinion that for thermoplastic, busy streets should take priority over lightly traveled streets near schools. Lt McHugh also noted that it would make little sense to put a thermoplastic crosswalk down on a street that is to be chip sealed in the near future.

8. Downing Square

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reviewed the issues with Downing Square:

- Turn from Bow to Lowell
- Westminster Avenue one-way westbound.
- Parallel parking on Park Avenue northbound.

Mike Rademacher raised the concern that parallel parking would cause more delay to Park Avenue when motorists stop to back into the spaces. Others expressed the view that

- Park Avenue was wide enough to minimize such delay
- The safety issues with diagonal parking outweigh this concern.

Lt. McHugh noted that one-way on Westminster would reduce cut-through traffic on that street, and suggested making the bump-out on Westminster larger. Elisabeth noted a serious visibility issue with eastbound Westminster traffic entering Downing Square. Make Westminster one-way would obviate this issue.

A next step would be a public meeting, preferably in Town Hall. A special effort would be made to notify residents of Westminster Avenue.

9. Route 60 / Mass Ave.

Jeff Maxtutis reviewed a plan for improved signage. He reported that the signage would cost \$2K and 8 countdown signal heads would cost approximately \$8K. Lt McHugh questioned the value of the new signal heads, but other committee members felt they would be of value, particularly in a wide intersection. Jeff offered to check the research on the topic.

10. Dallin School

Jeff Maxtutis reported that the acquisition of George Street did not make it into the Town Meeting warrant, and that, thus far, no special Town Meeting is planned.

11. Mass Ave Corridor

Scott Smith reported no news.

12. Safe Travel to Schools

Scott Smith and Lt. McHugh reported on the work being done at Hardy School to include clearer guidelines for dropoff, and a map of the walking school bus routes.

13. Measurement program

Ed Starr reviewed the list of suggestion traffic measurements to include three areas:

- north of Summer Street between Mystic Avenue and Forest Street, including Forest Street itself
- Appleton/Paul Revere/Eastern area
- East Arlington to include Margaret Street, Broadway and Lake Street.

14. TIP Items

Ed Starr briefly reviewed the list of suggested TIP items.

15. East Arlington parking

Scott Smith reported that nothing has happened in the past month.

16. Town Departments

Lt. McHugh reported that the Police department had received a \$2K grant from the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau for two weeks of traffic enforcement.

John Sanchez reported that he and Lt. McHugh attended a meeting of the Summer Street neighbors.

We briefly discussed ZipCar. Scott Smith suggested that a town official (possibly from the Planning Department) contact them to see about interest in expanding into Arlington.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Handouts:

Agenda packet with agenda, working groups, Board of Selectmen request for stop sign at Wilbur/Wollaston, minor project rotation list, list of Board of Selectmen requests with status, recommended follow-up steps with DPW, Spring 2006 suggestions for traffic measurements, suggested TIP items, outstanding voted actions - from Ed Starr

March 2006 minutes, Marathon/Waldo draft report, and draft Hardy School travel handout – from Scott Smith

Forest Street diagrams – from John Sanchez

Thermoplastic crosswalk list – from Howard Muise

Recommended signage change for Mass Ave / Route 60 – from Jeff Maxtutis

Downing Square diagrams – from Elisabeth Carr-Jones